CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

Am 854
4

George Lockrow.
A Birthday Present.
From Sister Phenie.
May, 1874.



BLUE VIOLET.

BY

MRS. MARY LATHAM CLARK.



Boston:
Published by D. Lothrop & Co.
Dover, N.H.: G. T. Day & Co.
1872.



ANSWER TO "BLUE VIOLET'S LETTER."

DEAR BLUE VIOLET: I cannot tell you how glad I was to hear from you, and to know that no harm had befallen you.

It is so like you to feel happy in making others so, and to be willing to breathe out your life for the good of those around you!

I have delayed writing to you, for

since I received your letter, I have had a very busy and anxious time.

My youngest child, Fringe-eye, has been sadly drooping, and for a long time I was afraid she would die, but I rejoice to say that she is better, and though she will, I fear, always be delicate, I hope to be able to keep her with me a long time yet.

I think it was on the morning after you left that I first noticed how languidly her little head drooped.

I implored the Sunbeam, that best of physicians, to stay by her all day, which he did, to my great joy and satisfaction.

Even the Zephyr, roving and careless as he generally seems, remained near,



gently fanning her for hours together, and bringing the rarest perfumes upon his wings to refresh the drooping one.

By night-fall she was better, and now, while I am writing, I can see that she looks quite bright and cheerful, seeming to enjoy the merry prattle of her sisters, as she has not done before since her illness.

I suppose you would like to know all the forest news.

A pair of blue-birds have gone to housekeeping in the chestnut overhead. They are very lively and talkative, and I think we shall find them pleasant neighbors.

The Wood-lily is to give a great party

to-night. All the flowers are invited, but I do not think I shall be able to leave my family to attend.

However, Zephyr has promised to come and tell us about it in the morning.

I expect it will be a gay affair. The glow-worms and fireflies are trimming their lamps, for there is to be a grand illumination.

The katydids and crickets have been tuning their instruments and practicing their new music all the morning, for there is to be a dance at which they will play.

The birds are now giving a series of grand concerts. One is held every morning about three o'clock; so, you see, those who can go abroad do not lack for amusements.

I must not forget to tell you what I saw a few nights ago — a sight that is rare now, although I have heard that before the footsteps of man had ever entered our forest, the flowers were continually favored with such lovely visions.

I saw the fairies at their dance upon the forest-green. It was enough to give one joy for a lifetime to watch their graceful movements, so light that sometimes as I gazed I was not quite sure whether it was really fairies that I saw, or the uncertain shimmer of the moonlight through the quivering branches.

Here comes Hummingbird to make us a morning call, and as all my children, from Cerulea to Fringe-eye, are so very

diffident and retiring. I must leave my writing and entertain my lively guest.

Perhaps he will carry my message to you. I will ask him. Adieu!

In love, your sister,

VIOLET.





BLUE VIOLET AT THE SEA-SIDE.

DEAR WOOD-VIOLET: Your sweet letter came to me refreshingly, like a spicy breath from my native forest. I was glad to learn all the news from birds and flowers that you wrote me, and although I felt when reading it a regret that I might never see you and my dear green home again, it was but for a moment, for my

present life is filled with a calm peace which I never knew before.

Sweet Maude, of whom I wrote you, makes me her constant companion.

Every day she receives from kind friends bouquets of hot-house flowers of every splendid hue, but after admiring them a little while she turns her eyes toward the marble vase of blue violets, and says, "I love these darlings of the forest best, dear mother."

She passes whole hours lying upon her little, snow-white couch, her own lovely face scarcely less white, with her eyes fixed lovingly upon me, while she passes her thin hand caressingly over my blossoms.

Just now I write to you from the most beautiful of places, over-looking the broad, blue sea.

I little thought when the birds used to tell us stories of the wonderful great water, stretching out farther than the eye could reach, that I should ever see it, but that pleasure is now mine. My Maude and her mother have come to the sea-shore to see if the refreshing breezes will not bring back the roses to the faded cheeks of the sweet child. She wished to have her canary and blue violets brought, so here we are together.

I wish I knew how to describe to you the beauty of the scene which I daily see from the window.

Sometimes the water is calm and still like the blue sky in summer, and ships sail slowly over its bosom like white-winged birds, or the fleecy clouds we used to watch together. Then, again, storms will arise, and the waves are lashed to foam, while their distant roar comes to our ears like the sound among the pines, when the angry wind shakes them.

To-day, sweet Maude has been arranging sea-moss upon paper. They look like the tracing of the tree-branches against the sky.

Some of these mosses have just been telling me a wonderful story of the sea, where they lived before the waves tossed them to the shore. It fairly bewilders me

to think what a radiant home they must have had in their coral grottos under the water, beautiful with shining gems, lovely shells, and waving sea-plants.

O, there are so many things in this world of which you and I, dear sister, never dreamed in our forest home!

I send, with this, love to all who still tenderly remember

Your true-hearted

VIOLET.



JANIE'S RIDE.

Dear, sweet, pale-faced little Janie is going to a ride—not a common ride in a chaise or a coach behind prancing horses down a long street with a cloud of dust rising behind, but a rare, sweet ride in a carriage of papa's own furnishing, with grandpa to draw it softly and good Rover to walk beside as guard.

"Are you warm enough, darling?"



asks the loving mother for the twentieth time, as she carefully wraps the little cloak more close around her dear child's shoulders, and covers her delicate little hands so that not a breath of air can reach them.

True, it is a bright spring day, and the vines are fresh and green, while the flowers in the garden-beds are blooming brightly, but the dear child has been long ill; and as this is the first day that she has been strong enough to go out of doors, the fond mother feels that she cannot be too tender of the little frail one.

How happy little Janie is now! Her blue eyes sparkle with pleasure, and a

faint, pink flush, delicate as that upon a wild rose petal, is on her cheeks.

"How good it is to be alive!" says she. "How lovely everything is! I did not know before that it was so sweet out of doors!"

"And how good it is," says the fond mother to herself as she watches the little lumbering carriage move slowly away, bearing its precious burden — "how good it is to have the little darling alive instead of lying cold and dead in her grave, as I feared for many weeks that she would be now! Blessed be God for sparing her, my sweet one, my only pet lamb, awhile longer to comfort us!"

So, as the mother goes about her

"household ways" with a sweet song of thankfulness rising to her lips, little Janie is riding slowly up and down the garden-walk, guided by the careful hand of her dear grandpa, while faithful Rover keeps close to her side, as if to keep her from harm.

It seems so bright and fresh and sweet out of doors that Janie cannot keep still.

She wonders if the world was ever so beautiful before, and she notices many things of which she never thought when she was well, and wandered wherever she wished at her "own sweet will."

"Oh, grandpa," says she, "how the dew sparkles on the grass and leaves! I can see all colors when the sun shines on

it, How sweet the flowers smell! And see the butterflies, grandpa! they are dancing in the air — whole companies of them! And oh, such flowers! the roses and hollyhocks! Were there ever so many in blossom before at a time? Hear the birds sing, grandpa! Do you suppose they are glad to see me out of doors again?"

Thus the little one chatters on, hardly giving grandpa time to answer one question before she asks another.

After a while, fearing that his little charge may be tired, he takes her to the cottage door, and lifts her carefully from the carriage into the arms of the dear mother who is waiting to receive her.



"Such a nice ride as I have had, dear mother," says Janie, "and everything is so beautiful! How good 'our Father in heaven' is to make such a lovely world for us to live in! I wish I could see him and thank him!"

"Ah!" thinks the mother, "if my sweet darling, when she lay in her little bed so sick, with closed eyes, had not opened them until she was in her heavenly home, she could have seen the Father and have thanked him for her joy; but how sad and heavy my heart would have been! Thank God that he has let me have her a little longer!"

So she takes off the many wrappings from the light form she holds in her arms,

and after kissing her tenderly she rocks her to and fro, until little Janie is fast asleep.



THE BIRTH-DAY WREATH.

Under a broad-spreading tree sat three dear, little girls; womanly Christine, loving Nina, and little, pet Gretchen.

They are so good and gentle that even the birds do not fear them, while the timid dove and her baby fawn dare



to come near and gaze upon them with their soft, wondering eyes.

It is a festival day at home, — the day of all the year that these little ones delight to honor, — their mother's birth-day; so they have been searching the woods and fields for flowers, the fairest and sweetest, with which to adorn her.

"Ah! Christine," says Nina, "that wreath is lovely. How sweetly you have twined together the wild-roses and forget-me-nots with the graceful green vines! Dear mother cannot help being pleased with it. What would be the best way to give it to her?"

"I have thought," answers the eldest sister, "that it would be a nice time,

when she is seated at the table, to go behind her and place the wreath upon her head."

"And put our arms around her neck and kiss her, telling her how much we love her," adds Nina.

"I will give her my bouquet to wear in her bosom," says little Gretchen.

"That will be charming; and dear mother will thank you for it, I know, as I will now;" and the good sister draws the little one to her side and kisses her tenderly.

"I wish," says Nina, thoughtfully, "that we had some beautiful present for our dear mother, she is so good,



and works so hard for us every day."

"I will tell you," says Christine, "what we can give her which would please her the best of anything, and that is more love and obedience. Let us be more ready to mind every little thing that she says, and save her all the steps that we can. Let us make her as little trouble as possible, and love and honor her more than ever before. This will be the best birth-day present we can make her."

Now the birth-day wreath is finished and the children arise and walk homeward, bearing it joyfully between them.

It is very beautiful, but fairer still

are the sweet and loving thoughts that have sprung up anew in their hearts, and which will crown their mothers life with joy and beauty.





THE MAGIC CREAM.

Within a certain room in the upper story of a boarding-house, with shaded light and locked doors, were once gathered together a number of school girls.

They were supposed by the teachers to be quietly asleep in their own beds, for the retiring bell had ceased its ringing long before. But they had some-

thing to do at this time far better than sleeping, so they thought, for upon the table around which they were eagerly gathered, was a heaping dish of most delicious strawberries, and beside it was a large package of loaf sugar, purchased that afternoon in anticipation of their feast.

A comical array of dishes was on the table,— mugs, tin dippers, saucers, tumblers, and, in short, every thing and any thing that could hold berries.

"Just think, girls, we have no spoons," said one, after taking survey of the preparations for the strawberry festival.

"Nor cream," said another; "O, if we only had some cream!"

"Well, Sue," said the first speaker, "if you will get the cream, I will hunt up the spoons."

"But where should I get it, pray?" said Sue.

"From the top of the milk pans, to be sure," said Maggie, the first speaker, nodding her head with a knowing air.

"But," began Sue, "that would be ste —"

"No, it would not," hastiy interrupted Maggie. "I think some of the top of the milk belongs to us as well as to the lady-professors. I have looked into the cream pitcher at their end of

the table many a time when I have been going past it and I have seen something of an entirely different color from the sky-blue fluid we put into our coffee. I'll not say that it is cream, but the cream goes somewhere, and we do not get any of it. What say, girls, shall we have our share to-night? All those in favor, please say Ay."

A smothered chorus of "Ayes" went up from around the table.

"'Tis a vote," continued Maggie, "and now who'll hang the bell around the cat's neck, that's the next question; or, in other words, who'll be the one to get the cream? It must be one that is light-footed and that knows the way.


R. Sc.

Meanwhile I'll get the spoons, for I know just where they are."

"And Sue must get the cream," said another of the girls, "for she is little and light, and besides, she was the first to suggest it."

Poor little Sue's heart fell at these words; her conscience was tender, and she failed to see the right in Maggie's arguments.

While she was wavering in her own mind between her sense of duty and her desire to please her companions, Maggie had slipped quietly down stairs and had returned with a handful of teaspoons and a large one with them.

"This is for you to dip the cream with, Sue," whispered she.

"The coast is clear, every body is asleep and it is light as can be. Now take your mug and spoon and tip-toe away."

Little Sue, thus urged, started upon her errand, unwillingly enough, it must be confessed.

She tripped lightly down stairs, across a long hall and down another flight before she reached the pantry where she knew the pans of milk were placed every night.

Hastily and with a trembling hand she filled her mug, and then started up stairs again.

Half way up the last flight a slight noise made her start suddenly; and then, on looking down, she saw a long white streak upon one of the stairs.

"O, I have spilled a part of my cream," said she to herself. "I must get something and wipe it up."

She soon reached the room where the girls were, and seizing a towel, ran hastily back.

In a few minutes she burst into the room again with her face as white as a sheet, and whispered, tremblingly,

"Girls, I have spilled some cream on the stairs and I cannot wipe it up."

"Nonsense," said one of the girls.

"A solemn truth," said Sue; "the

more I rub it the whiter it grows. O dear! I wish I had not stolen the cream!" and the poor child wept with terror and remorse.

"I'll go," said one of the bravest of the gilrs.

"And I," said another. "Give me the towel and I will try my luck."

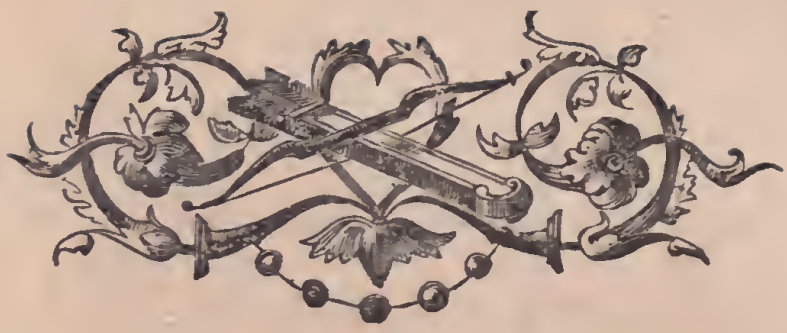
They were absent but a few moments, and then with half smothered bursts of laughter they rushed into the room, exclaiming,

"O, girls, it was not cream at all! It was the moonlight on the stairs we were trying to wipe out."

"What a joke," said the girls; and after laughing till they cried, they

gathered around the table and feasted upon the strawberries and cream.

Little Sue, however, sat quietly by and refused to partake of the proffered dainties. She firmly resolved in her inmost heart to learn a lesson from her fright and never again to take what did not rightfully and truly belong to her.



A SONG FOR THE YOUNGEST.

Air: "Billy Boy."

1

O where have you been, little girl, little girl?
O where have you been, little darling?
I've been standing at the door,
Where I've often stood before,
Looking out into the garden, dear mamma.



2

And what did you see, little girl, little girl?
And what did you see, little darling?
O I saw the flowers bright,
Pink and yellow, blue and white,
And the bees humming o'er them, dear mamma.

3

And whut did you hear, little girl, little giirl?
And what did you hear, little darling?
O I'll tell you what I heard,
'Twas a little singing bird,
As he flew far above me, dear mamma!



"WHAT IS MY THOUGHT LIKE?"

One day Nelly Cole had company. The children had the long dining-room to themselves; and a merry time they had of it, playing Roll the platter, Blind man's buff, Hunt the slipper, and many other games.

By-and-by they became tired, and



thought they would play something more quiet.

"Let's tell stories," said one.

"Or play Proverbs," said another.

"Or Put in a word," said a third.

"I'll tell you," said Nelly, "what would be a nice plan. We'll go and ask mother to come and play with us. She is a splendid hand to think of new games."

"The last thing I should think of," whispered one little girl to another, "would be to ask my mother to play with me!"

When Nelly asked her mother to come and play with them, she answered:

"I will come with pleasure, only you must let me sew."

"Oh yes," said Nelly, "we want to play a still game, and you can sew just as well as not."

"Now," continued she, after her mother was seated in the dining-room, work in hand, while the children gathered about her, "what shall we play?"

"The game I propose," said Mrs. Cole, "is called What is my thought like?"

"I never played that," said one little girl.

"Nor I," chimed in several other voices.

"No matter," said Nelly; "I've played it and know it is easy, and you will learn it as we go on."

"Now," said Nelly's mother, "I have thought of something, and you must tell me what it is like."

"But we don't know what your thought is," said a little girl who sat near.

"I must not tell you what my thought is until you have said what it is like," said Mrs. Cole.

"That's funny," said the little girl.

This is the way they played the game:

Mother. I have a thought, Rosie; what is my thought like?

Rosie. Like a book.

Mother. Carrie, what do you think my thought is like?

Carrie. Like the tongs.

Hattie. And I think it is like a bottle of cologne.

Nelly. Your thought is like the sunset.

Mary. I think it is like a doll.

Mother. My thought was a rose. Why, Rosie, is a rose like a book?

Rosie. Because it has leaves.

Mother. Carrie, why is a rose like the tongs?

Carrie. I will give it up.

Mother. Then you must pay a forfeit. Whom will you have for a judge?

Carrie. I will have Rosie.

Mother. What shall she do, Rosie?

Rosie. She shall tell a story.

Carrie. That's easy enough:

"Little Miss Muffett
Sat on a tuffett
Eating her curds and whey;
There came a great spider
And sat down beside her,
And frightened Miss Muffet away."

(They all laugh.)

Mother. Hattie, why is a rose like a bottle of cologne?

Hattie. Because it smells sweet.

Mother. Nelly, why is a rose like the sunset?

Nelly. Because it is often red.

Mother. Mary, why is a rose like a doll?

Mary. Because little girls love them both so much.

Mother. That is very well played, indeed. Now, if you wish to play it again, let Mary, who sits next to me, think of something, and we will all tell her what it is like.

So they played the game a long time, and enjoyed it very much.

Perhaps some of you little ones will like to play it also, and, unless you are already familiar with it, will be glad that I have told you how.